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Shakspeare - King Lear - 1811

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By Exchange

Shakspeare,

KING LEAR;

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS,

BY WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

ALTERED AS PERFORMED.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY THE LONGWORTHS,

**At the Dramatic Repository,
*Shakspeare-Gallery.***

Nov.—1811.

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1864, Jan. 27,

By Exchange of
Duplicates.

REMARKS.

The story of this tragedy has been told in many an ancient ballad, and other ingenious works ; but Mr. Malone supposes, that Shakspeare is more indebted for his fable to "the true chronicle history of king Lear and his three daughters, Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia," than to any other production.

Camden, in his remains, gives the following account of an english king, which is also similar to the story of Leir, or Lear.

"Ina, king of the west saxons, had three daughters, of whom, upon a time, he demanded. whether they did love him, and so would do during their lives, above all others? the two elder swore deeply they would ; the youngest, but the wisest, told her father Cally, that albeit she did love, honor, and reverence him, and so would whilst she lived, as much as nature and daughterly duty at the uttermost could expect ; yet she did think that one day it would come to pass, that she should affect another more fervently, meaning her husband, when she were married."

This relation, the commentator imagines, may probably have been applied to king Lear ; whom Geoffrey of Monmouth says, "nobly governed his country for sixty years, and died about eight hundred years before the birth of Christ."

Notwithstanding the number of histories and books of fiction, that have promulgated this piteous tale of a monarch and his children, it remains a doubt among the most learned on this subject, whether such an event, as here described, ever, in reality, occurred.

But, if it never did before the time of Shakspeare, certainly something very like it has taken place since. Lear is not represented much more affectionate to his daughters by Shakspeare, than James the second is by Hume. James's daughters were, besides, under more than ordinary obligations to their king and father, for the tenderness he had evinced towards their mother, in raising her from an humble station to the elevation of his own; and thus preserving these two princesses from the probable disgrace of illegitimate birth.

Even to such persons as hold it was right to drive king James from the throne, it must be a subject of lamentation, that his beloved children were the chief instruments of those concerned. When the king was informed that his eldest daughter, Mary, was landed, and proceeding to the metropolis, in order to dethrone him, he called, as the historian relates, for the princess Anne—and called for her by the tender description of his “dear, his only remaining daughter.” On the information given to his majesty in return, that “she had forsook the palace, to join her sister,” the king wept and tore his hair.

Lear, exposed on a bleak-heath, suffered not more than James, at one of the sea ports, trying to escape to France. King Lear was only pelted by a storm, king James by his merciless subjects.

Not one of Shakspeare's plays more violently agitates the passions than this tragedy; parents and children are alike interested in every character, and instructed by each. There is, nevertheless, too much of ancient cruelty in many of the events. An audience finds horror prevail over compassion, on Gloster's loss of his eyes: and though dr. Johnson has vindicated this frightful incident, by saying, “Shakspeare well knew what would please the audience for which he wrote;” yet this argument is no apology for the correctors of Shakspeare, who have altered the drama to gratify spectators more refined, and yet have not expunged this savage and improbable act.

The nice distinction which the author has made be-

tween the real and the counterfeit madman in this tragedy, is a part of the work particularly admired by the experienced observers of that fatal disorder; and to sum up the whole worth of the production, the reader may now say of it, with some degree of qualification, what Tate said before he had employed much time and taste on the alteration: "It is a heap of jewels, unstrung and unpolished, yet so dazzling in their disorder, that I soon perceived I had seized a treasure."

It is curious and consolatory for a minor critic to observe, how the great commentators on Shakspeare differ in their opinions.

Tate alters the play of king Lear, and instead of suffering the good Cordelia to die of grief, as Shakspeare had done, he rewards her with life, love, and a throne. Addison, in his spectator, condemns him for this; dr. Johnson commends him for it; both showing excellent reasons. Then comes Steevens, who gives a better reason than all, why they are all wrong.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	Drury-Lane	New-York
King Lear	Mr. <i>Kemble</i>	Mr. <i>Cooke</i>
Duke of Bur- gundy }	— <i>Dignum</i>	— <i>Carpender</i>
Duke of Cornwall	— <i>C. Kemble</i>	— <i>M^r Farland</i>
Duke of Albany	— <i>Whitfield</i>	— <i>Doyle</i>
Earl of Kent	— <i>Aickin</i>	—
Earl of Gloster	— <i>Packer</i>	— <i>Knox</i>
Edgar -	— <i>Wroughton</i>	— <i>Cooper</i>
Edmund -	— <i>Barrymore</i>	— <i>Pritchard</i>
First knight	— <i>Caulfield</i>	— <i>Wheatley</i>
Second do.	— <i>Phillimore</i>	— <i>M^r Enery</i>
Third do.	— <i>Maddocks</i>	—
Physician -	— <i>Jones</i>	— <i>Morrell</i>
Captain of the guard }	— <i>Trueman</i>	— <i>Hallam</i>
Officer -	— <i>Cooke</i>	—
Oswald -	— <i>R. Palmer</i>	— <i>Darley</i>
Herald -	— <i>Bland</i>	— <i>Olliff</i>
Page to Goneril	Mast. <i>Chatterley</i>	Miss <i>Jones</i>
Page to Regan	Mr. <i>Gell</i>	— <i>R. Ryckman</i>
Old man -	— <i>Burton</i>	Mr. <i>Jones</i>
Edward -	— <i>Benson</i>	— <i>Carpender</i>
First ruffian	— <i>Webb</i>	— <i>Jones</i>
Second do.	— <i>Evans</i>	—
 Goneril -	 Mrs. <i>Cuyler</i>	 Mrs. <i>Stanley</i>
Regan -	— <i>Powell</i>	— <i>Claude</i>
Cordelia -	— <i>Siddons</i>	— <i>Darley</i>
Aranthe -	Miss <i>Tidswell</i>	— <i>Wheatley</i>

KING LEAR.

ACT I.

SCENE I—*an antechamber in King Lear's palace.*

enter EDMUND.

Edm. Thou, nature, art my goddess ; to thy law
My services are bound : why am I then
Deprived of a son's right, because I came not
In the dull road that custom has prescribed ?
Why bastard ? wherefore base ? when I can boast
A mind as gen'rous, and a shape as true
As honest madam's issue ? why are we
Held base, who, in the lusty stealth of nature
Take fiercer qualities than what compound
The scanted births of the stale marriage-bed ?
Well then, legitimate Edgar, to thy right
Of law I will oppose a bastard's cunning.
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
As to legitimate Edgar ; with success
I've practised yet on both their easy natures.
Here comes the old man, chafed with the information,
Which last I forged against my brother Edgar ;
A tale so plausible, so boldly utter'd,
And heighten'd by such lucky accidents,
That now the slightest circumstance confirms him,
And base-born Edmund, spite of law, inherits.

enter KENT and GLOSTER.

Glost. Nay, good my lord, your charity
O'ershoots itself, to plead in his behalf ;
You are yourself a father, and may feel

The sting of disobedience from a son
First-born and best-beloved. O, villain Edgar!

Kent. Be not too rash; all may be forgery,
And time yet clear the duty of your son.

Glost. Plead with the seas, and reason down the
winds,

Yet shalt thou ne'er convince me; I have seen
His foul designs through all a father's fondness.

Edm. It works as I could wish; I'll show myself.

Glost. Ha, Edmund! welcome, boy. O Kent! see
here

Inverted nature, Gloster's shame and glory;
This by-born, the wild sally of my youth,
Pursues me with all filial offices;
Whilst Edgar, begg'd of heaven, and born in honor,
Draws plagues upon my head, that urge me still
To curse in age the pleasure of my youth.
Nay, weep not, Edmund, for thy brother's crimes.
O gen'rous boy! thou sharest but half his blood,
Yet lovest beyond the kindness of a brother;
But I'll reward thy virtue. Follow me.
My lord, you wait the king, who comes resolved
To quit the toils of empire, and divide
His realms amongst his daughters. Heaven succeed it!
But much I fear the change.

Kent. I grieve to see him,
With such wild starts of passion hourly seized,
As render majesty beneath itself.

Glost. Alas! tis the infirmity of his age;
Yet has his temper ever been unfixt,
Chol'ric, and sudden. (*flourish of trumpets*)
Hark, they approach.

[*exeunt Gloster, Kent, and Edmund*]

enter CORDELIA and EDGAR.

Edg. Cordelia, royal fair, turn yet, once more,
And, ere successful Burgundy receive
The treasure of thy beauties from the king,
Ere happy Burgundy for ever fold thee,
Cast back one pitying look on wretched Edgar.

Cord. Alas! what would the wretched Edgar with
The more unfortunate Cordelia,
Who, in obedience to a father's will,
Flies from her Edgar's arms to Burgundy's? [*areunt*]

SCENE II—*a room of state in the palace.*

(*flourish of trumpets—drums*)

*king LEAR upon his throne—ALBANY, CORNWALL,
BURGUNDY, KENT, GLOSTER, GONERIL, REGAN,
CORDELIA, captain of the guards, knights, pages,
gentleman with the map, gentleman with the crown,
lords, ladies, &c. &c. discovered.*

Lear. Attend, my lords of Albany and Cornwall,
With princely Burgundy.

Alb. We do, my liege.

Lear. Give me the map. Know, lords, we have di-
vided

In three our kingdom, having now resolved
To disengage from our long toil of state,
Conferring all upon your younger years.
You, Burgundy, Cornwall, and Albany,
Long in our court have made your amorous sojourn,
And now are to be answer'd. Tell me, my daughters,
Which of you loves us most, that we may place
Our largest bounty with the largest merit.
Goneril, our eldest born, speak first.

Gon. Sir, I do love you more than words can utter,
Beyond what can be valued rich or rare ;
Nor liberty, nor sight, health, fame, or beauty,
Are half so dear ; my life for you were vile ;
As much as child can love the best of fathers.

Lear. Of all these bounds, e'en from this line to this,
With shady forests, and wide skirted meads,
We make thee lady ; to thine and Albany's issue
Be this perpetual. What says our second daughter,
Regan, wife to Cornwall ?

Reg. My sister, sir, in part, exprest my love ;

For such as hers, is mine, though more extended :
Sense has no other joy that I can relish ;
I have my all in my dear liege's love.

Lear. Therefore, to thee and thine hereditary,
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom.

Cord. Now comes my trial. How am I distrest,
That must with cold speech tempt the chol'ric king,
Rather to leave me dowerless, than condemn me
To Burgundy's embraces !

Lear. Speak now our last, not least in our dear love,
So ends my task of state,—Cordelia, speak ;
What can'st thou say to win a richer third,
Than what thy sisters gain'd ?

Cord. Now must my love in words, fall short of
theirs,

As much as it exceeds in truth.—Nothing, my lord.

Lear. Nothing ?

Cord. Nothing.

Lear. Nothing can come of nothing ; speak again.

Cord. Unhappy am I that I can't dissemble
Sir, as I ought, I love your majesty,
No more, nor less.

Lear. Take heed, Cordelia ;
Thy fortunes are at stake ; think better on't,
And mend thy speech a little.

Cord. O, my liege !
You gave me being, bred me, dearly love me,
And I return my duty as I ought,
Obey you, love you, and most honor you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they love you all ?
Haply when I shall wed, the lord, whose hand
Shall take my plight, will carry half my love ;
For I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all.

Lear. And goes thy heart with this ?
Tis said that I am chol'ric. Judge me, gods,
Is there not cause ? now, minion, I perceive
The truth of what has been suggested to us,
Thy fondness for the rebel son of Gloster.—
And, oh ! take heed, rash girl, lest we comply

With thy fond wishes, which thou wilt too late
Repent, for know, our nature cannot brook
A child so young and so ungentle.

Cord. So young, my lord, and true.

Lear. Thy truth then be thy dower ;
For, by the sacred sun and solemn night,
I here disclaim all my paternal care,
And, from this minute, hold thee as a stranger
Both to my blood and favor.

Kent. This is phrensy.

Consider, good my liege——

Lear. Peace, Kent ;

Come not between a dragon and his rage.
I loved her most, and in her tender trust
Design'd to have bestow'd mine age at ease.
So be my grave my peace, as here I give
My heart from her, and with it all my wealth !
My lords of Cornwall and of Albany,
I do invest you jointly with full right
In this fair third, Cordelia's forfeit dower.
Mark me, my lords, observe our last resolve ;
Ourself, attended by an hundred knights,
Will make abode with you in monthly course ;
The name alone of king remain with me,
Yours be the execution and the revenues.
This is our final will ; and, to confirm it,
This coronet part between you.

Kent (kneels) Royal Lear,
Whom I have ever honor'd as my king,
Loved as my father, as my master follow'd,
And, as my patron, thought on in my prayers——

Lear. Away. the bow is bent, make from the shaft.

Kent. (rises) No, let it fall, and drench within my
heart ;

Be Kent unmannerly when Lear is mad ;
Thy youngest daughter——

Lear. On thy life, no more.

Kent. What wilt thou do, old man ?

Lear. Out of my sight.

Kent. See better first.

Lear. Now, by the gods——

Kent. Now, by the gods, rash king, thou swear'st in vain.

Lear. Ha! traitor!

Kent. Do, kill thy physician, Lear;
Strike through my throat; yet, with my latest breath,
I'll thunder in thine ear my just complaint,
And tell thee to thy face, that thou dost ill.

Lear. Hear me, rash man; on thine allegiance hear me;

Since thou hast striven to make us break our vow,
And press'd between our sentence and our power,
Which nor our nature, nor our place, can bear,
We banish thee for ever from our sight
And kingdom; if, when three days are expired,
Thy hated trunk be found in our dominions,
That moment is thy death.—Away.

Kent. Why, fare thee well, king; since thou art resolved,

I take thee at thy word; I will not stay
To see thy fall. The gods protect thee, maid,
That truly think'st, and has most justly said.
Thus to old climates my old truth I bear;
Friendship lives hence, and banishment is here.

[*exit Kent*]

Lear. Now, Burgundy, you see her price is fall'n;
Yet, if the fondness of your passion still
Affect her as she stands, dowerless, and lost
In our esteem, she's yours; take her, or leave her.

Burg. Pardon me, royal Lear, I but demand
The dower yourself proposed, and here I take
Cordelia by the hand, dutchess of Burgundy.

Lear. Then leave her, sir; for, by a father's rage,
I tell you all her wealth.

(*Cordelia throws herself at Lear's feet*)

Away! away! away! (*flourish of trumpets, &c*)

[*exeunt all but Cordelia*]

enter EDGAR.

Edg. Has heaven then weigh'd the merit of my love.

Or is it the raving of a sickly thought?
 Could Burgundy forego so rich a prize,
 And leave her to despairing Edgar's arms?
 Have I thy hand, Cordelia? do I clasp it?
 The hand that was this minute to have join'd
 My hated rival's? do I kneel before thee,
 And offer at thy feet my panting heart?
 Smile, princess, and convince me; for, as yet,
 I doubt, and dare not trust the dazling joy.

Cord. Some comfort yet, that twas no vicious blot
 That has deprived me of a father's grace;
 But merely want of that, ~~that~~ makes me rich
 In wanting it; a smooth professing tongue.
 O sisters! I am loath to call your fault
 As it deserves; but use our father well,
 And wrong'd Cordelia never shall repine.

Edg. O heavenly maid! that art thyself thy dow'r,
 Richer in virtue than the stars in light;
 If Edgar's humble fortunes may be graced
 With thy acceptance, at thy feet he lays them.
 Ha! my Cordelia, dost thou turn away?
 What have I done t' offend thee?

Cord. Talk'd of love.

Edg. Then I've offended oft; Cordelia too
 Has oft permitted me so to offend.

Cord. When, Edgar, I permitted your addresses,
 I was the darling daughter of a king;
 Nor can I now forget my royal birth,
 And live dependent on my lover's fortune;
 I cannot to so low a fate submit;
 And therefore study to forget your passion,
 And trouble me upon this theme no more.

Edg. Thus majesty takes most state in distress.
 How are we tost on fortune's fickle flood!
 The wave, that with surprising kindness, brought
 The dear wreck to my arms, has snatch'd it back,
 And left me mourning on the barren shore.

Cord. This baseness of the ignoble Burgundy
 Draws just suspicion on the race of men;
 His love was interest, so may Edgar's be,

And he but with more compliment dissemble ;
 If so, I shall oblige him by denying ;
 But, if his love be fix'd, such constant flame
 As warms my breast, if such I find his passion,
 My heart as grateful to his truth shall be,
 And cold Cordelia prove as kind as he.

[*exit Cordelia*

enter EDMUND, *hastily*.

Edm. Brother, I've found you in a lucky minute :
 Fly, and be safe ; some villain has incensed
 Our father against your life.

Edg. Distress'd Cordelia—but oh, more cruel !

Edm. Hear me, sir ; your life, your life's in danger.

Edg. And yet, perhaps, 'twas but pretended coldness,
 To try how far my passion would pursue.

Edm. He hears me not ; 'wake, 'wake, sir.

Edg. Say you, brother ?—

No tears, good Edmund ; if thou bring'st me tidings
 To strike me dead, for charity delay not ;
 That present will befit so kind a hand.

Edm. Your danger, sir, comes on so fast,
 That I want time t' inform you ; but retire,
 Whilst I take care to turn the pressing stream.
 O gods ! for heaven's sake, sir,—

Edg. Pardon me, sir, a serious thought
 Had seized me ; but I think you talk'd of danger,
 And wish'd me to retire.—Must all our vows
 End thus ?—friend, I obey you.—O Cordelia !

[*exit Edgar*

Edm. Ha ! ha ! fond man ! such credulous honesty
 Lessens the glory of my artifice ;
 His nature is so far from doing wrongs,
 That he suspects none : if this letter speed,
 And pass for Edgar's, as himself would own
 The counterfeit, but for the foul contents,
 Then my designs are perfect.—Here comes Gloster.

enter GLOSTER.

Glost. Stay. Edmund, turn ; what paper were you
 reading ?

Edm. A trifle, sir.

Glost. What need then that terrible despatch of it
Into your pocket? come, produce it, sir.

Edm. A letter from my brother, sir: I had
Just broke the seal, but knew not the contents;
Yet, fearing they might prove to blame,
Endeavor'd to conceal it from your sight.

Glost. This is Edgar's character.

(reads) This policy of fathers is intolerable, that keeps
our fortunes from us till age will not suffer us to en-
joy them; I am weary of the tyranny. Come to me,
that of this I may speak more. If our father would
sleep till I wake him, you should enjoy half his pos-
sessions, and live beloved of your brother.

Sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy
Half his possessions!—Edgar to write this
'Gainst his indulgent father! death and hell!
Fly, Edmund, seek him out; wind me into him,
That I may bite the traitor's heart, and fold
His bleeding entrails on my vengeful arm.

Edm. Perhaps twas writ, my lord, to prove my vir-
tue.

Glost. These late eclipses of the sun and moon
Can bode no less; love cools, and friendship fails;
In cities mutiny, in countries discord;
The bond of nature crack'd 'twixt son and father.—
Find out the villain, do it carefully,
And it shall lose thee nothing. *[exit Gloster]*

Edm. So, now my project's firm; but, to make
sure,

I'll throw in one proof more, and that a bold one;
I'll place old Gloster where he shall o'erhear us
Confer of this design; whilst, to his thinking,
Deluded Edgar shall accuse himself.

Be honesty my interest, and I can
Be honest too; and what saint so divine
That will successful villany decline? *[exit Edmund]*

SCENE III—*the court before the duke of Albany's palace.*

enter KENT, disguised.

Kent. Now, banish'd Kent, if thou can'st pay thy duty,
In this disguise, where thou dost stand condemn'd,
Thy master Lear shall find thee full of labors.

enter king LEAR, attended by his knights.

Lear. In there, and tell our daughter we are here.
[*exit first knight*]

Now, what art thou ?

Kent. A man, sir.

Lear. What dost thou profess, or would'st with us ?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem, to serve him truly that puts me in trust, to love him that's honest, to converse with him that's wise and speaks little, to fight when I can't choose, and to eat no fish.

Lear. I say, what art thou ?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the king.

Lear. If thou be as poor for a subject, as he is for a king, thou art poor enough.—Dost thou know me, fellow ?

Kent. No, sir ; but you have that in your countenance, which I would fain call master.

Lear. What's that ?

Kent. Authority.

Lear. What service can'st thou do ?

Kent. I can keep honest counsel, mar a curious tale in the telling, deliver a plain message bluntly ; that, which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in ; and the best of me is diligence.

Lear. How old art thou ?

Kent. Not so young, sir, to love a woman for singing ; nor so old, to dote on her for any thing : I have years on my back, forty-eight.

Lear. Thy name ?

Kent. Caius.

Lear. Follow me ; thou shalt serve me.

enter OSWALD singing, and passing king Lear carelessly.

Now, sir ?

Osw. Sir.—Tol de rol, &c. *[exit singing]*

Lear. What says the fellow ? call the clod pole back.

[exeunt Kent and second knight]

3 Knight. My lord, I know not ; but, methinks, your highness is entertained with slender ceremony.

Lear. Say'st thou so ?

Thou but remember'st me of mine own conception.

enter first Knight.

Why came not that slave back when I call'd him ?

1 Knight. My lord, he answered, i'th' surliest manner, that he would not.

Lear. I hope our daughter did not so instruct him.

OSWALD brought in by KENT and second knight.

Now, who am I, sir ?

Osw. My lady's father,

Lear. My lady's father ! my lord's knave.

(strikes him)

Osw. I'll not be struck, my lord.

Kent. Nor tripp'd neither, you vile civet-box.

(trips up his heels)

Lear. I thank thee, fellow, thou servest me.

Kent. Come, sir, arise, away ; I'll teach you differences. *[exit Oswald]*

Gon. (within) By day and night ! this is insufferable ;

I will not bear it.

enter GONERIL, attended.

*Lear. Now, daughter, why that frontlet on ?
Speak, does that frown become our presence ?*

*Gon. Sir, this licentious insolence of your servants
Is most unseemly ; hourly they break out*

B 2

In quarrels, bred by their unbounded riots ;
 I had fair hope, by making this known to you,
 To have had a quick redress ; but find, too late,
 That you protect and countenance their outrage ;
 And therefore, I take this freedom, which
 Necessity makes discreet.

Lear. Are you our daughter ?

Gon. Come, sir, let me entreat you to make use
 Of your discretion, and put off betimes
 This disposition that of late transforms you
 From what you rightly are.

Lear. Does any here know me ? why, this is not
 Lear !

Does Lear walk thus ? speak thus ? where are his
 eyes ?

Who is it that can tell me who I am ?
 Your name, fair gentlewoman ?

Gon. Come sir, this admiration's much o' th' sa-
 vor

Of other your new humors ; I beseech you
 To understand my purposes aright ;
 As you are old, you should be staid and wise :
 Here do you keep an hundred knights and squires,
 Men so debauch'd and bold, that this our palace
 Shows like a riotous inn, a tavern, brothel :
 Be then advised by her, that else will take
 That which she begs, to lessen your attendants ;
 Take half away, and see that the remainder
 Be such as may befit your age, and know
 Themselves and you.

Lear. Darkness and devils !—

Saddle my horses, call my train together.
 Degenerate viper !—I'll not stay with thee ;
 I yet have left a daughter—serpent ! monster !—
 Lessen my train, and call them riotous !
 All men approved, of choice and rarest parts,
 That each particular of duty know.—
 How small, Cordelia, was thy fault !—o Lear,
 Beat at this gate that let thy folly in.
 And this dear judgment out !—go, go, my people.

enter ALBANY, attended.

Ingrateful duke!—prepare my horses.—Was this your will?

Who stirs?

[exit fourth knight]

Alb. What, sir?

Lear. Death! fifty of my followers at a clap?

Alb. The matter, madam?

Gon. Never afflict yourself to know the cause,
But give his dotage way.

Lear. Blasts upon thee!

Th' untented woundings of a father's curse
Pierce every sense about thee!—old fond eyes,
BewEEP this cause again, I'll pluck ye out,
And cast ye, with the waters that ye lose,
To temper clay.—No, gorgon;—thou shalt find
That I'll resume the shape, which thou dost think
I have cast off for ever.

Gon. Mark ye that?

Alb. I'm ignorant—

Lear. It may be so, my lord.—Hear, nature, hear;
Dear goddess, hear! suspend thy purpose, if
Thou didst intend to make this creature fruitful!
Into her womb convey sterility!
Dry up in her the organs of increase;
That from her derogate body never spring
A babe to honor her!—if she must teem,
Create her child of spleen; that it may live,
And be a thwart disnatured torment in her!
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth;
With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks;
Turn all her mother's pains, and benefits,
To laughter and contempt, that she may feel,
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is,
To have a thankless child!—away, away!

[exeunt king Lear and his attendants—

Albany, Goneril, and their attendants]

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE I—the earl of Gloster's castle.

enter EDMUND.

Edm. The duke comes here to-night ; I'll take advantage
Of his arrival to complete my project,—
Brother, a word ; come forth ! tis I, your friend.

enter EDGAR.

My father watches for you, fly this place ;
Intelligence is given where you are hid ;
Take the advantage of the night.—Bethink,
Have you not spoke against the duke of Cornwall
Something might show you a favorer of
Duke Albany's party ?

Edg. Nothing ; why ask you ?

Edm. Because he's coming here to-night in haste,
And Regan with him.

Edg. Let them come on ; I'll stay and clear myself.

Edm. Your innocence at leisure may be heard,
But Gloster's storming rage as yet is deaf,
And you may perish ere allow'd the hearing.
I hear our father coming—pardon me :—
In cunning I must draw my sword upon you :—
Draw ; seem to defend yourself : now quit you well ;
Yield ; come before my father ;—help, ho, here !
Fly, brother ;—help, here, help !—farewell, farewell —
[exit Edgar]

Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion
Of our more fierce encounter—I have seen
Drunkards do more than this in sport.

*(stabs himself in the arm)**enter GLOSTER and servants.**Glost.* Now, Edmund, where's the traitor ?

Edm. Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword
out,

Mumbling of wicked charms,—

Glost. But where is he ?

Edm. Look, sir, I bleed.

Glost. Where is the villain, Edmund ?

Edm. Sir, he is fled. When by no means he could—

Glost. By no means, what ?

Edm. Persuade me to the murder of your lordship ;

But that I told him the revenging gods

'Gainst parricides did all their thunders bend ;

Spoke with how manifold and strong a bond

The child was bound to the father ;—sir, in fine,

Seeing how loathly opposite I stood

To his unnatural purpose, in full motion,

With his prepared sword, he charges home

My unprovided body, lanced my arm :

But when he saw my best alarm'd spirits,

Bold in the quarrel's right, roused to the encounter,

Or whether gasted by the noise I made,

Full suddenly he fled.

Glost. Let him fly far, this kingdom shall not hide him.

The noble duke my patron comes to-night ;

By his authority I will proclaim

Rewards for him, that brings him to the stake,

And death for the concealer ;

Then of my lands, loyal and natural boy,

I'll work the means to make thee capable. [*exunt*]

SCENE II—*before the earl of Gloster's castle.*

enter KENT, in disguise, and OSWALD.

Osw. Good morrow, friend ; belong'st thou to this house ?

Kent. Ask them will answer thee.

Osw. Where may we set our horses ?

Kent. I' th' mire.

Osw. I am in haste ; pr'ythee, an' thou lov'st me, tell me.

Kent. I love thee not.

Osw. Why, then, I care not for thee.

Kent. An' I had thee in Lipsbury pinfold, I'd make thee care for me.

Osw. What dost thou mean? I know thee not.

Kent. But, minion, I know thee.

Osw. What dost thou know me for?

Kent. For a base, proud, beggarly, white-livered, glass gazing, super serviceable, finical rogue; one that would be a pimp in way of good service, and art nothing but a composition of knave, beggar, coward, pander,—

Osw. What a monstrous fellow art thou, to rail at one that is neither known of thee, nor knows thee!

Kent. Impudent slave! not know me, who but two days since tripped up thy heels before the king! draw, miscreant, or I'll make the moon shine through thee.
(drawing his sword)

Osw. What means the fellow? I tell thee, I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. Draw, you rascal. I know your roguishness's office; you come with letters against the king, taking my young lady vanity's part against her royal father: draw, rascal.

Osw. Murder! murder! help!

[*Exit, Kent after him*]

(*flourish of trumpets*)

Enter duke of CORNWALL, REGAN, captain of the guard, and attendants—GLOSTER and EDMUND.

Glost. All welcome to your graces; you do me honor.

Corn. Gloster, we have heard with sorrow, that your life

Has been attempted by your impious son:
But Edmund here has paid you strictest duty.

Glost. He did bewray his practice, and received
The hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.

Corn. Is he pursued?

Glost. He is, my lord.

Reg. Use our authority to apprehend
The traitor, and do justice on his head.
For you, Edmund, that have signalized
Your virtue, you from henceforth shall be ours ;
Natures of such firm trust we much shall need.
A charming youth, and worth my farther thought !

Corn. Lay comfort, noble Gloster, to your breast,
As we to ours. This night be spent in revels.
We choose you, Gloster, for our host to night,
A troublesome expression of our love.
On, to the sports before us. (*noise within*) Who are
these ?

enter OSWALD, pursued by KENT.

Glost. Now, what's the matter ?

Corn. Keep peace upon your lives ; he dies that
strikes.

Whence, and what are ye ?

Reg. The messengers from our sister, and the king.

Corn. Your difference ? speak.

Osw. I'm scarce in breath, my lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestir'd your valor.
Nature disclaims the dastard ! a tailor made him.

Corn. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel ?

Osw. Sir, this old ruffian here, whose life I spared
In pity to his beard,——

Kent. Thou essence bottle !

In pity to my beard !—your leave, my lord,
And I will tread the musk-cat into mortar.

Corn. Know'st thou our presence ?

Kent. Yes, sir, but anger has a privilege.

Corn. Why art thou angry ?

Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword
And have no courage ; office, and no honesty ;
Not frost and fire hold more antipathy
Than I and such a knave.

Glost. Why dost thou call him knave ?

Kent. His countenance likes me not.

Corn. No more, perhaps, does mine, nor his, or hers.

Kent. Plain dealing is my trade ; and, to be plain,
sir,

I have seen better faces in my time,
Than stand on any shoulders now before me.

Reg. This is some fellow, that having once been
praised

For bluntness, since affects a saucy rudeness ;
But I have known one of these surly knaves,
That in his plainness harbor'd more design
Than twenty cringing complimenting minions.

Corn. What's the offence you gave him ?

Osw. Never any, sir ;

It pleased the king, his master, lately
To strike me on a slender misconstruction ;
Whilst, watching his advantage, this old lurcher
Tripp'd me behind, for which the king extoll'd him ;
And, flush'd with the honor of his boid exploit,
Drew on me here again.

Corn. Bring forth the stocks ; we'll teach you.

Kent. Sir, I'm too old to learn ;

Call not the stocks for me ; I serve the king,
On whose employment I was sent to you :
You'll show too small respect, and too bold malice
Against the person of my royal master,
Stocking his messenger

(attendants bring forth the stocks)

Corn. Bring forth the stocks ; as I have life and
honor,

There shall he sit till noon.

(attendants seize Kent)

Reg. Till noon, my lord ! till night, and all night
too.

Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
You would not use me so.

Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.

(attendants put Kent into the stocks)

Glost. Let me beseech your graces to forbear him ;
His fault is much, and the good king his master,
Will check him for't ; but needs must take it ill
To be thus slighted in his messenger.

Corn. We'll answer that ;
Our sister may receive it worse to have
Her gentleman assaulted. To our business, lead.

[exunt all but Gloster into the castle]

Glost. I am sorry for thee, friend ; tis the duke's
pleasure,
Whose disposition will not be controll'd ;
But I'll entreat for thee.

Kent. Pray do not, sir.—
I have watch'd and travell'd hard ;
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.
Farewell t'ye, sir. *[exit Gloster into the castle]*
Good king, that must approve the common saw !
'Thou out of heaven's benediction comest
To the warm sun.—All weary and o'erwatch'd,
I feel the drowsy guest steel on me ; take
Advantage, heavy eyes, of this kind slumber,
Not to behold this vile and shameful lodging. *(sleeps)*

SCENE III—a forest.

enter EDGAR.

Edg. I heard myself proclaim'd ;
And by the friendly hollow of a tree,
Escaped the hunt. No port is free, no place,
Where guards and most unusual vigilance
Do not attend to take me.—How easy now
'Twere to defeat the malice of my trail,
And leave my griefs on my sword's reeking point ;
But love detains me from death's peaceful cell,
Still whispering me, Cordelia's in distress :
Unkind as she is, I cannot see her wretched,
But must be near to wait upon her fortune.
Who knows but the blest minute yet may come.
When Edgar may do service to Cordelia ?
That charming hope still ties me to the oar
Of painful life, and makes me to submit
To th' humblest shifts to keep that life afoot.

C



My face I will besmear. and knit my locks ;
The country gives me proof and precedent
Of bedlam beggars, who. with roaring voices,
Strike in their numb'd and mortify'd bare arms
Pins, iron spikes, thorns, sprigs of rosemary ;
And thus from sheep cotes, villages and mills,
Sometimes with pray'rs, sometimes with lunatic bans,
Enforce their charity. Poor Tryligood ! poor Tom !
That's something yet. Edgar I am no more. [Exit

SCENE IV—*before the earl of Gloster's castle*—KENT
discovered, in the stocks still.

enter king LEAR and his knights.

Lear. Tis strange, that they should so depart from
home,

And not send back our messenger.

Kent. Hail, noble master !

Lear. How. makest thou this shame thy pastime ?
What's he that has so much mistook thy place,
To set thee here ?

Kent. It is both he and she, sir ; your son and
daughter.

Lear. No.

Kent. Yes.

Lear. No. I say.

Kent. I say, yea.

Lear. They durst not do't :

They could not, would not do't.—

Resolve me with all modest haste. which way
Thou may'st deserve, or they impose this usage.

Kent. My lord, when at their home
I did commend your highness' letters to them,
Ere I was risen, arrived another post,
Stew'd in his haste, breathless and panting forth
From Goneril, his mistress, salutations ;
Whose message being deliver'd, they took horse,
Commanding me to follow, and attend

The leisure of their answer ; which I did :
But meeting here that other messenger,
Whose welcome I perceived had poisoned mine,
Being the very fellow that of late
Had shown such rudeness to your highness, I,
Having more man than wit about me, drew ;
On which he raised the house with coward cries :—
This was the trespass, which your son and daughter
Thought worth the shame you see it suffer here.

Lear Oh ! this spleen swells upwards to my heart,
And heaves for passage !—down, thou climbing rage,
Thy element's below. Where is this daughter ?

enter GLOSTER, from the castle.

Kent. Within, sir, at a masque.

Lear. Now, Gloster ?—ha !

(Gloster whispers Lear)

Deny to speak with me ? th'are sick, th'are weary,
They've travell'd hard to night—mere fetches, sir,
Bring me a better answer.

Glost. My dear lord,

You know the fiery quality of the duke.

Lear. Vengeance ! death ! plague ! confusion !
Fiery ?—what quality—why Gloster, Gloster,
I'd speak with the duke of Cornwall and his wife.

Glost. I have inform'd them so.

Lear. Inform'd them ! dost thou understand me,
man ?

I tell thee. Gloster.—

Glost Ay, my good lord.

Lear. The king would speak with Cornwall ; the
dear father

Would with his daughter speak, commands her ser-
vice.

Are they inform'd of this ? my breath and blood !

Fiery ? the fiery duke ? tell the hot duke.—

No, but not yet ; may be, he is not well ;

Infirmity doth still neglect all office ;

I beg his pardon, and I'll chide my rashness,

That took the indisposed and sickly fit

For the sound man.—But wherefore sits he there ?
 Death on my state ! this act convinces me,
 That this retiredness of the duke and her
 Is plain contempt.—Give me my servant forth.—
 Go, tell the duke and's wife I'd speak with 'em,
 Now, instantly.—Bid 'em come forth and bear me ;
 Or at their chamber door I'll beat the drum,
 Till it cry, sleep to death.

enter CORNWALL, REGAN, captain of the guards, and attendants from the castle.

Oh ! are you come ?

Corn. Health to the king !

Reg. I am glad to see your highness.

Lear. Regan, I think you are ; I know what cause
 I have to think so. Should'st thou not be glad,
 I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb,
 Sepulch'ring an adultrous.—

Beloved Regan, thou wilt shake to hear
 What I shall utter ;—thou couldst ne'er ha' thought it ;
 Thy sister's naught : o Regan, she has ty'd
 Ingratitude like a keen vulture here ;
 I scarce can speak to thee.

(Kent is set at liberty by the attendants)

Reg. I pray you, sir, take patience ; I have hope
 That you know less to value her desert,
 Than she to slack her duty.

Lear. Ha ! how's that ?

Reg. I cannot think my sister in the least
 Would fail in her respects ; but if, perchance,
 She has restrain'd the riots of your followers,
 'Tis on such grounds, and to such wholesome ends,
 As clear her from all blame.

Lear. My curses on her !

Reg. O, sir, you're old,
 And should content you to be ruled and led
 By some discretion that discerns your state
 Better than yourself ; therefore, good sir,
 Return to our sister, and say you have wrong'd her.

Lear. Ha ! ask her forgiveness !

Do you but mark how this becomes the house:
Dear daughter, I confess that I am old ;
Age is unnecessary ; on my knees I beg,
That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food.

Reg. Good sir, no more of these unsightly passions ;

Return back to our sister.

Lear. Never, Regan ;
She hath abated me of half my train,
Look'd black upon me, stabb'd me with her tongue :
All the stored vengeance of heaven fall
On her ingrateful head ! strike her young bones,
Ye taking airs, with lameness !—

Reg. O the blest gods ! thus will you wish on me,
When the rash mood——

Lear. No, Regan, thou shalt never have my curse ;
'Thy tender nature cannot give thee o'er
To such impiety ; thou better know'st
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
And dues of gratitude ; thou bear'st in mind
The half o'th' kingdom, which our love conferr'd
On thee and thine.

Reg. Good sir, to th' purpose.

Lear. Who put my man i'th' stocks ?

(trumpet sounds)

Corn. What trumpet's that ?

Reg. I know't, my sister's ; this confirms her letters.

enter OSWALD.

Sir, is your lady come !

Lear. More torture still !

Out, varlet, from my sight ! *(strikes Oswald)*

Corn. What means your grace !

Lear. Who stock'd my servant ? Regan, I have
hope

Thou didst not know it. *(trumpet sounds)*

enter GONERIL and attendants,

Who comes here ? oh, heavens !

C. 2

If you do love old men ; if your sweet sway
 Allow obedience ; if yourselves are old,
 Make it your cause ; send down and take my part !
 Why, gorgon, dost thou come to haunt me here ?
 Art not ashamed to look upon this beard ?
 Darkness upon my eyes, they play me false !
 O, Regan, wilt thou take her by the hand ?

Gon. Why not by th' hand, sir ? how have I offend-
 ed ?

All's not offence that indiscretion finds,
 And dotage terms so.

Lear. Heart, thou art too tough !

Reg. I pray you, sir, being old, confess you are so,
 If, till the expiration of your month,
 You will return, and sojourn with our sister,
 Dismissing half your train, come then to me ;
 I'm now from home, and out of that provision
 That shall be needful for your entertainment.

Lear. Return with her, and fifty knights dismiss'd ?
 No, rather I'll abjure all roofs, and choose
 To be companion to the midnight wolf,
 My naked head exposed to th' merciless air,
 Than have my smallest wants supply'd by her.

Gon. At your choice, sir.

Lear. Now, I prythee, daughter, do not make me
 mad !

I will not trouble thee, my child ; farewell ;
 Let shame come when it will, I do not call it ;
 I do not bid the thunder bearer strike,
 Nor tell tales of thee to avenging heaven.
 Mend when thou can'st ; be better at thy leisure ;
 I can be patient, I can stay with Regan,
 I, and my hundred knights.

Reg. Your pardon, sir ;
 I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
 For your fit welcome.

Lear. Is this well spoken, now ?

Reg. My sister treats you fair. What ! fifty fol-
 lowers ?

Is it not well ? what should you need of more ?

Gon. Why might not you, my lord, receive attendance

From those whom she calls servants, or from mine ?

Reg. Why not, my lord ? if then they chance to slack you,

We could control them. If you come to me,

For now I see the danger, I intreat you

To bring but five and twenty ; to no more

Will I give place.

Lear. I gave you all !

Reg. And in good time you gave it.

Lear. Hold, now, my temper ! stand this bolt unmoved

And I am thunder proof.

The wicked, when compared with the more wicked,

Seem beautiful ; and not to be the worst,

Stands in some rank of praise. Now, Goneril,

Thou art innocent again, I'll go with thee ;

Thy fifty yet does double five and twenty,

And thou art twice her love.

Gon. Hear me, my lord. (*it begins to rain*)

What need you five and twenty, ten, or five,

To follow in a house, where twice so many

Have a command t' attend you ?

Reg. What need one ? (*distant thunder*)

Lear. Heav'ns drop your patience down !

You see me here, ye gods, a poor old man,

As full of grief as age, wretched in both !——

If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts

Against their father, fool me not so much

To bear it tamely ! touch me with noble anger !

O, let not women's weapons, water drops,

Stain my man's cheek !—no, you unnatural hags,

I will have such revenges on you both,

That all the world shall—I will do such things,—

What they are, yet I know not ; but they shall be

The terrors of the earth.—You think I'll weep ;

No, I'll not weep :—

I have full cause of weeping ; but this heart

Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,

Or ere I'll weep.—(*rain—thunder—lightning*)

O, gods, I shall go mad!

[*exit king Lear, Kent, and the knights—Cornwall, Regan, Goneril, Gloster, Oswald, captain of the guards, and attendants, into the castle*]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE I—*a desert heath—rain—thunder—lightning.*

enter king LEAR and KENT.

Lear. Blow, winds, and burst your cheeks! rage louder yet!

Fantastic lightning, singe, singe my white head!

Spout cataracts, and hurricanoes fall,

Till you have drown'd the towns and palaces

Of proud, ingrateful man!

Kent. Not all my best intreaties can persuade him Into some needful shelter, or to 'bide

This poor slight cov'ring on his aged head,

Exposed to this wild war of earth and heaven.

(*thunder*)

Lear. Rumble thy fill! fight whirlwind, rain and fire!

Not fire, wind, rain, or thunder, are my daughters:

I tax not you, ye elements, with unkindness:

I never gave you kingdoms, call'd you children;

You owe me no obedience. 'Then let fall

Your horrible pleasure?—here I stand your slave,

A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man.—

(*rain—thunder—lightning*)

Yet I will call you servile ministers,

That have with two pernicious daughters join'd

Your high engender'd battle 'gainst a head

So old and white as this. Oh! oh! tis foul.

Kent. Hard by, sir, is a hovel, that will lend Some shelter from this tempest.

Lear. I will forget my nature. What! so kind a father!—
(*rain—thunder—lightning*)

Ay, there's the point.

Kent. Consider, good my liege, things, that love night,

Love not such nights as this; these wrathful skies
Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,
And make them keep their caves: such drenching rain,
Such sheets of fire, such claps of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring winds, have ne'er been known.
(*thunder*)

Lear. Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within these undiscover'd crimes!—
Hide, hide, thou murd'rer, hide thy bloody hand!—
Thou perjured villain, holy hypocrite,
That drink'st the widow's tears, sigh now, and ask
These dreadful summoners' grace!—I am a man
More sinn'd against, than sinning.

Kent. Good sir, to th' hovel.

Lear. My wits begin to turn.—
Come on, my boy; how dost, my boy? art cold?
I'm cold myself; show me this straw, my fellow;
The art of our necessity is strange,
And can make vile things precious.—My poor knave,
Cold as I am at heart, I've one place there
That's sorry yet for thee.

(*rain—thunder—lightning—exunt*)

SCENE II—*a room in Gloster's castle.*

enter EDMUND.

Edm. The storm is in our louder rev'lings drown'd.
Thus would I reign, could I but mount a throne.
The riots of these proud imperial sisters
Already have imposed the galling yoke
Of taxes, and hard impositions, on
The drudging peasant's neck, who bellows out

His loud complaints in vain. Triumphant queens!
 With what assurance do they tread the crowd!
 Oh! for a taste of such majestic beauty,
 Which none but my hot veins are fit t' engage;
 Nor are my wishes desperate; for even now,
 During the banquet, I observed their glances
 Shot thick at me; and, as they left the room,
 Each cast, by stealth, a kind inviting smile,
 The happy earnest——ha!

*(two pages, from several entrances, deliver him each
 a letter, and exeunt)*

(reads) Where merit is so transparent, not to behold
 it were blindness, and not to reward it, ingratitude.

GONERIL.

Enough! blind and ungrateful should I be,
 Not to obey the summons of this oracle.
 Now for the second letter.

(reads) If modesty be not your enemy, doubt not to
 find me your friend.

REGAN.

Excellent sybil! o my glowing blood!
 I am already sick of expectation,
 And pant for the possession.—— Here Gloster comes,
 With business on his brow; be hush'd, my joys.

enter GLOSTER.

Glost. I come to seek thee, Edmund, to impart a
 business of importance. I know thy loyal heart is
 touched to see the cruelty of these ungrateful daugh-
 ters against our royal master.

Edm. Most savage and unnatural!

Glost. This change in the state sits uneasy. The
 commons repine aloud at their female tyrants; al-
 ready they cry out for the re instalment of their good
 old king, whose injuries, I fear, will inflame them into
 mutiny.

Edm. 'Tis to be hoped, not fear'd.

Glost. Thou hast it, boy; tis to be hoped indeed.
 On me they cast their eyes, and hourly court me
 To lead them on; and, whilst this head is mine,

I'm theirs. A little covert craft, my boy,
And then for open action ; twill be employment
Worthy such honest daring souls as thine.
Thou, Edmund, art my trusty emissary.
Haste on the spur, at the first break of day,
With these despatches to the duke of Cambray.

(gives him letters)

You know what mortal feuds have always flamed
Between this duke of Cornwall's family, and his ;
Full twenty thousand mountaineers
Th' inveterate prince will send to our assistance.
Despatch ; commend us to his grace, and prosper.

[exit Gloster]

Edm. Yes, credulous old man,
I will commend you to his grace,
His grace the duke of Cornwall :—instantly,
I'll show him these contents in thy own character,
And seal'd with thy own signet ; then forthwith
The chol'ric duke gives sentence on thy life ;
And to my hand thy vast revenues fall,
To glut my pleasures, that till now have starved.

(retires)

GLOSTER returns, followed by CORDELIA and ARANTHE, poorly dressed—Edmund observing at a distance.

Cord. Turn, Gloster, turn ; by all the sacred pow'rs,
I do conjure you give my griefs a hearing : *(kneels)*
You must, you shall, nay, I am sure you will ;
For you were always styled the just and good.

Glost. What would'st thou, princess ? rise, and
speak thy griefs.

Cord. Nay, you shall promise to redress them too,
Or here I'll kneel for ever. I entreat
Thy succor for a father, and a king,
An injured father, and an injured king.

Edm. O charming sorrows ! how her tears adorn her !

Glost. Consider, princess, *(raises her)*
For whom thou begg'st, tis for the king that wrong'd
thee.

Cord. O name not that; he did not, could not wrong me.

Nay, muse not, Gloster; for it is too likely
This injured king ere this is past your aid,
And gone distracted with his savage wrongs.

Edm. I'll gaze no more;—and yet my eyes are charm'd.

Cord. Or, what if it be worse?—can there be worse?
Ah, tis too probable, this furious night
Has pierced his tender body; the bleak winds
And cold rain chill'd, or lightning struck, him dead;
If it be so, your promise is discharged,
And I have only one poor boon to beg;
That you'd convey me to his breathless trunk,
With my torn robes to wrap his hoary head,
With my torn hair to bind his hands and feet,
Then with a shower of tears
To wash his clay-smear'd cheeks, and die beside him.

Glost. Oh, fair Cordelia, thou hast piety
Enough t'atone for both thy sisters' crimes;
I have already plotted to restore
My injured master, and thy virtue tells me
We shall succeed, and suddenly. [*exit Gloster*]

Cord. Despatch, Aranthé;
For in this disguise, we'll instantly
Go seek the king, and bring him some relief.

Aran. How, madam! are you ignorant
That your most impious sisters have decreed
Immediate death for any that relieve him?

Cord. I cannot dread the furies in this case.

Aran. In such a night as this! consider, madam,
For many miles about there's scarce a bush
To shelter in.

Cord. Therefore no shelter for the king.
And more our charity to find him out.
What have not women dared for vicious love!
And we'll be shining proofs that they can dare
For piety as much. (*thunder*)
Blow winds, and lightnings fall;
Beld in my virgin innocence I'll fly

My royal father to relieve, or die.

[Exeunt Cordelia and Aranthè]

Edm. In this disguise, we'll instantly
Go seek the king!—ha! ha! a lucky change:
That virtue, which I fear'd would be my hind'rance,
Has proved the bawd to my design.
I'll bribe two ruffians shall at distance follow,
And seize them in some desert place; and there
Whilst one retains her, t'other shall return
To inform me where she's lodged: I'll be disguised too.
Whilst they are poaching for me, I'll to the duke
With these despatches: then to the field,
Where, like the vigorous Jove, I will enjoy
This Semele in a storm; twill deaf her cries,
Like drums in battle, lest her groans should pierce
My pitying ear, and make the am'rous fight less fierce.
[Exit]

SCENE III—another part of the heath—rain—thunder
—lightning.

enter king LEAR and KENT.

Kent. Here is the place, my lord; good my lord,
enter:

The tyranny of this open night's too rough
For nature to endure.

Lear. Let me alone.

Kent. Good my lord, enter.

Lear. Wilt break my heart?

Kent. I'd rather break my own.

Lear. Thou think'st 'tis much that this contentious
storm

InvaDES us to the skin; so 'tis to thee;
But where the greater malady is fix'd,
The lesser is scarce felt: the tempest in my mind
Does from my senses take all feeling else,
Save what beats there. Filial ingratitude!
Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand
For lifting food to't?—but I'll punish home!

D

No, I will weep no more. (*rain—thunder—lightning*)
 In such a night
 To shut me out!—pour on, I will endure—
 In such a night as this! o Regan, Goneril!
 Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all—
 Oh, that way madness lies! let me shun that;
 No more of that.

Kent. See, my lord, here's the entrance.

Lear. Well, I'll go in,
 And pass it all: I'll pray, and then I'll sleep. (*thunder*)

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
 That 'bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
 How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides
 Sustain this shock? your raggedness defend you
 From seasons such as these? oh, I have ta'en
 Too little care of this. Take physic, pomp;
 Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
 That thou may'st cast the superfluous to them,
 And show the heavens more just!

Edg. (in the hovel) Five fathom and a half.—Poor
 Tom!

Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there? th'
 straw?

Come forth.

enter EDGAR, disguised.

Edg. Away! the foul fiend follows me—through
 the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind—mum, go
 to thy bed and warm thee—ha! what do I see?
 By all my griefs, the poor old king bare headed,
 And drench'd in this foul storm! professing syrens,
 Are all your protestations come to this?

Lear. Tell me, fellow, didst thou give all to thy
 two daughters?

Edg. Who gives any thing to poor Tom, whom the
 foul fiend has led through fire and through flame,
 through bushes and bogs? that has laid knives under
 his willow, and halters in his pew; that has made him
 proud of heart to ride on a bay trotting horse over four-

inched bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor? —bless thy five wits! Tom's a cold. Bless thee from whirlwinds, star blasting, and taking! do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes. Sa, sa; there I could have him now, and there, and there again.

Lear. What, have his daughters brought him to this pass?

Could'st thou save nothing? didst thou give them all?

Kent. He has no daughter, sir.

Lear. Death! traitor, nothing could have subdu'd nature

To such a lowness, but his unkind daughters.

Edg. Pillicock sat upon pillicock hill; hallo, hallo, hallo.

Lear. Is it the fashion that discarded fathers Should have such little mercy on their flesh? Judicious punishment! twas this flesh begot Those pelican daughters.

Edg. Take heed of the foul fiend; obey thy parents; keep thy word justly; swear not; commit not with man's sworn spouse; set not thy sweet heart on proud array. (*wind and rain*) Tom's a cold.

Lear. What hast thou been?

Edg. A serving-man, proud of heart; that curled my hair; used perfume and washes; that served the lust of my mistresses heart, and did the act of darkness with her; swore as many oaths as I spoke words; and broke them all in the sweet face of heaven: let not the paint, nor the patch, nor the rustling of silks, betray thy poor heart to woman; keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets, thy pen from creditors' books and defy the foul fiend. (*wind and rain*) Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind.—Ha, no nonny, dolphin, my boy, my boy, sessa; let him trot by.

Lear. Death! thou wert better in thy grave, than thus to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity of the sky Yet consider him well, and man's no more than this; thou art indebted to the worm for no silk,

to the beast for no hide, to the cat for no perfume.—
Ha! here's too of us are sophisticated: thou art the
thing itself; unaccommodated man is no more than
such a poor, bare, forked, animal as thou art.

Off, off, ye vain disguises, empty lending.

I'll be my original self; quick, quick, uncase me.

Kent. Defend his wits, good heaven!

Lear. One point I had forgot; what is your name!

Edg. Poor Tom, that eats the swimming frog, the
wall-newt and the water-newt; that in the fury of his
heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow dung for
sallads, swallows the old rat and the ditch dog; that
drinks the green mantle off the standing pool; that's
whipt from tything to tything; that has three suits to
his back, six shirts to his body;

*Horse to ride, and weapon to wear;
But rats and mice, and such small deer,
Have been Tom's food for seven long year.*

Beware my follower; peace, Smolkid, peace, thou
foul fiend!

Lear. One word more, but be sure true counsel; tell
me, is a madman a gentleman, or a yeoman?

Kent. I fear'd twou'd come to this; his wits are
gone.

Edg. Frateretto calls me, and tells me, Nero is an
angler in the lake of darkness. Pray, innocent, and
beware the foul fiend.

Lear. Right, ha! ha!—was it not pleasant to have
a thousand with red hot spits come hissing in upon
them?

Edg. My tears begin to take his part so much,
They mar my counterfeiting.

Lear. The little dogs and all, Tray, Blanch, and
Sweetheart, see, they bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his head at 'em: 'vaunt, ye
curs!

*Be thy mouth or black, or white,
Tooth that poisons, if it bite;*

*Mastiff, greyhound, mungrel grim,
Hound, or spaniel, brache, or lym,
Bob-tail tike, or trundle tail ;
Tom will make 'em weep and wail ;
For with throwing thus my head,
Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.— See, see,
see.*

Come, march to wakes, and fairs, and market towns.
—Poor Tom, thy horn is dry.

Lear. You, sir, I entertain you for one of my hundred ; only I do not like the fashion of your garments ; you'll say they're persian ; but no matter, let 'em be changed.

Edg. This is the foul Flibbertigibbet ; he begins at curfew, and walks till the first cock ; he gives the web, and the pin ; knits the elflocks, squints the eye, and makes the hare-lip ; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creatures of the earth.

enter GLOSTER.

*Saint Withold footed thrice the wold,
He met the nightmare and her nine fold,
Twas there he did appoint her ;
He bid her alight, and her troth plight,
And aroint the witch, aroint her.*

Glost. What, has your grace no better company ?

Edg. The prince of darkness is a gentleman ; Mo-do he is called, and Mahu.

Glost. Go with me, sir ; hard by I have a tenant. My duty cannot suffer me to obey in all your daughters' hard commands : though their injunctions be to bar my doors, and let this tyrannous night take hold upon you, yet I have ventured to come seek you out, and bring you where both fire and food are ready.

Kent. Good my lord, take this offer.

Lear. First, let me talk with this philosopher. Say, Stagyrte, what is the cause of thunder ?

Glost. Beseech you, sir, go with me.

D 2

Lear. I'll talk a word with this same learned theban.

What is your study?

Edg. How to prevent the fiend, and to kill vermin.

Lear. Let me ask you a word in private.

Kent. His wits are quite unsettled; good sir, let's force him hence.

Glost. Can'st blame him? his daughters seek his death.

This bedlam but disturbs him the more; fellow begone.

Edg. Child Rowland to the dark tower came,
His word was still fie, foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a british man.—o, torture!

[*exit Edgar into the hovel*]

Glost. Now, I pr'ythee, friend, let's take him in our arms;

There is a litter ready; lay him in't,
And drive towards Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet

But welcome and protection.
Good, sir, along with us.

Lear. You say right; let 'em anatomize Regan, see what breeds about her heart. Is there any cause in nature for these hard hearts?

Kent. I beseech your grace,—

Lear. Hist!—make no noise, make no noise;—draw the curtains; closer, closer:—so, so, so,—we'll go to supper i' the morning.—so, so, so.

[*king Lear falls asleep, and is carried off by Gloucester and Kent—thunder and lightning.*]

enter CORDELIA and ARANTHE.

Aran. Dear madam, rest you here, our search is vain;

Look here's a shed; 'beseech you, enter here.

Cord. Pr'ythee, go in thyself, seek thy own ease;
Where the mind's free, the body's delicate;
This tempest diverts me from the thought
Of what would hurt me more.

enter two RUFFIANS.

1 Ruff. We've dogg'd them far enough ; this place is private ; I'll keep them prisoners here within this hovel, whilst you return and bring lord Edmund hither : but help me first to house them.—Now, despatch, *(they seize Cordelia and Aranthé)*

Cord. Help !—murder !—help—Gods, some kind thunderbolt
To strike me dead !

Aran. Help ! help !—

enter EDGAR, from the hovel.

Edg. What cry was that ?—ha ! women seized by ruffians !

Is this a time and place for villany ?

Avaunt, ye bloodhounds !

(drives them off with his quarter staff)

O, speak, what are ye, that appear to be
O' th' tender sex, and yet ungarded wander
Through the dead mazes of this dreadful night,
Where, though at full, the clouded moon scarce darts
Imperfect glimmerings ?

Cord. First, say, what art thou ?
Our guardian angel, that were pleased to assume
That horrid shape to fright the ravishers ?
We'll kneel to thee.

Edg. O, my tumultuous blood !
By all my trembling veins, Cordelia's voice !
Tis she herself !—my senses, sure, conform
To my wild garb, and I am mad indeed.

Cord. Whate'er thou art, befriend a wretched virgin,
And, if thou canst, direct our weary search.

Edg. Who relieves poor Tom, that sleeps on the
nettle, with the hedgehog for his pillow ?

*Whilst Smug ply'd the bellows,
She truck'd with her fellows ;
The freckle-faced Mob*

*Was a blouze and a drab,
Yet Swithin made Oberon jealous.—o, torture!*

Aran. Alack, madam! a poor wandering lunatic.

Cord. And yet his language seem'd but now, well temper'd.

Speak, friend, to one more wretched than thyself;
And if thou hast one interval of sense,
Inform us, if thou canst, where we may find
A poor old man, who through this heath hath stray'd
The tedious night. Speak, saw'st thou such a one?

Edg. The king her father, whom she's come to seek
Through all the terrors of this night: o gods!
That such amazing piety, such tenderness,
Should yet to me be cruel!

Yes, fair one, such a one was lately here,
And is convey'd by some that came to seek him
To a neighboring cottage; but distinctly where
I know not.

Cord. Blessings on them!

Let's find him out, Aranthe; for thou seest
We are in heaven's protection. (*going off*)

Edg. O, Cordelia!

Cord. Ha!—thou know'st my name.

Edg. As you did once know Edgar's.

Cord. Edgar!

Edg. The poor remains of Edgar, what
Your scorn has left him.

Cord. Do we wake, Aranthe?

Edg. My father seeks my life: which I preserved;
In hope of some blest minute to oblige
Distress Cordelia, and the gods have given it;
That thought alone prevail'd with me to take
This frantic dress, to make the earth my bed,
With these bare limbs all change of season 'bide,
Noon's scorching heat, and midnight's piercing cold,
To feed on offals, and to drink with herds,
To combat with the winds, and be the sport
Of clowns, or what's more wretched yet, their pity.

Cord. Was ever tale so full of misery!

Edg. But such a fall as this, I grant, was due
To my aspiring love ; for twas presumptuous,
Though not presumptuously pursued ;
For, well you know, I wore my flame conceal'd,
And silent, as the lamps that burn in tombs ;
Till you perceived my grief, with modest grace
Drew forth the secret, and then seal'd my pardon.

Cord. You had your pardon, nor can you challenge
more.

Edg. What do I challenge more ?
Such vanity agrees not with these rags :
When in my prosp'rous state, rich Gloster's heir,
You silenced my pretences, and enjoin'd me
To trouble you upon that theme no more ;
Then what reception must love's language find
From these bare limbs, and beggar's humble weeds ?

Cord. Such as a voice of pardon to a wretch com-
demn'd ;
Such as the shouts
Of succoring forces to a town besieged.

Edg. Ah ! what new method now of cruelty ?

Cord. Come to my arms, thou dearest, best of men,
And take the kindest vows, that e'er were spoke
By a protesting maid.

Edg. Is't possible ?

Cord. By the dear vital stream, that bathes my
heart,
These hallow'd rags of thine, and naked virtue,
These abject tassels, these fantastic shreds,
To me are dearer than the richest pomp
Of purpled monarchs.

Edg. Generous, charming maid !
The gods alone, that made, can rate thy worth !
This most amazing excellence shall be
Fame's triumph in succeeding ages, when
Thy bright example shall adorn the scene,
And teach the world perfection.

Cord. Cold and weary,
We'll rest awhile, Aranthe, on that straw,
Then forward to find out the poor old king.

Edg. Look, I have flint and steel, the implements,
Of wand'ring lunatics; I'll strike a light,
And make a fire beneath this shed, to dry
Thy storm-drench'd garments, ere thou liest to rest
thee:

Then, fierce and wakeful as th' hesperian dragon,
I'll watch beside thee to protect thy sleep:
Meanwhile the stars shall dart their kindest beams,
And angels visit my Cordelia's dreams. [*exunt*]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE I—*an apartment in the earl of Gloster's castle.*
enter the duke of CORNWALL, REGAN, EDMUND, ED-
WARD and servants.

Corn. I will have my revenge ere I depart his
house.

Regan, see here, a plot upon our state;
Tis Gloster's character, that has betray'd
His double trust, of subject and of host.

Reg. Then double be our vengeance; this confirms
Th' intelligence that we but now received,
That he has been this night to seek the king.
But who, sir, was the kind discoverer?

Corn. Our eagle, quick to spy, and fierce to seize,
Our trusty Edmund.

Reg. 'Twas a noble service:
O Cornwall, take him to thy trust,
And wear him as a jewel at thy heart.

Edm. Think, sir, how hard a fortune I sustain,
That makes me thus repent of serving you.
O, that this treason had not been, or I
Not the discoverer!

Corn. Edmund, thou shalt find
A father in our love, and from this minute
We call thee earl of Gloster; but there yet
Remains another justice to be done,

And that's to punish this discarded traitor ;
But lest thy tender nature should relent
At his just sufferings, nor brook the sight,
We wish thee to withdraw.

Reg. The grotto, sir, within the lower grove
Has privacy, to suit a mourner's thought.

Edm. And there I may expect a comforter—
Ha, madam?

Reg. What may happen, sir, I know not ;
But 'twas a friend's advice. [exit Edmund]

Corn. Bring in the traitor.

enter GLOSTER, brought in by two servants.

Bind fast his arms.

Glost. What mean your graces ?

You are my guests ; pray, do me no foul play.

Corn. Bind him, I say. hard, harder yet.

Reg. Now, traitor, thou shalt find——

Corn. Speak, rebel, where hast thou sent the king ?
Whom, spite of our decree, thou saved'st last night.

Glost. I'm tied to th' stake, and I must stand the
course.

Reg. Say where, and why, thou hast conceal'd him ?

Glost. Because I would not see thy cruel hands
Tear out his poor old eyes, nor thy fierce sister
Carve his anointed flesh ; but I shall see
The swift-wing'd vengeance overtake such children.

Corn. See't thou shalt never ; slaves, perform your
work ; *(the servants take Gloster out)*

Out with those treacherous eyes ; despatch, I say.

Glost. *(within)* He, that will think to live till he
be old,

Give me some help.—O, cruel ! oh, ye gods !

Edw. Hold, hold, my lord. I bar your cruelty ;
I cannot love your safety, and give way
To such inhuman practice.

Corn. Ah, my villain !

Edw. I have been your servant from my infancy ;
But better service have I never done you,
Than with this boldness.

Corn. Take thy death, slave. (*stabs Edward*)

Edw. Nay, then revenge, whilst yet my blood is warm !

(*draws his sword, runs Cornwall through the body, and is carried off, dying*)

Reg. Help here,—are you not hurt, my lord ?

Glost. (*within*) Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature,

To quit this horrid act.

Reg. Out, treacherous villain,

Thou call'st on him that hates thee ; it was he

That broach'd thy treason, show'd us thy despatches ;

There—read, and save the cambrian prince the labor.

(*throws the letters out to him*)

Glost. (*within*) O my folly !

Then Edgar was abused ; kind gods, forgive me that !

Reg. How is't, my lord ?

Corn. Turn out that eyeless villain, let him smell
His way to Cambray ; throw this slave upon a dung-
hill.

Regan, I bleed apace ; give me your arm.

(*exeunt Regan and Cornwall
supported by his servants*)

SCENE II—the open country.

enter EDGAR, in disguise.

Edg. The lowest and most abject thing of fortune
Stands still in hope, and is secure from fear.

The lamentable change is from the best,

The worst returns to better.—Who comes here ?

enter GLOSTER, led by an OLD MAN.

My father poorly led ! deprived of sight !

The precious stones torn from their bleeding rings !

When will the measure of my woes be full ?

Old M. O, my good lord ! I have been your tenant,
And your father's tenant, these fourscore years.

Glost. Away, get thee away ; good friend, begone ;
Thy comforts can do me no good at all.

Thee they may hurt.

Old M. You cannot see your way.

Glost. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes;
I stumbled when I saw: o, dear son, Edgar,
The food of thy abused father's wrath,
Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I'd say I had eyes again.

Edg. Alas! he's sensible that I was wrong'd,
And, should I own myself, his tender heart
Would break betwixt th' extremes of grief and joy.

Old M. How now! who's there?

Edg. A charity for poor Tom.—Play fair, and defy
the foul fiend.—

O gods! and must I still pursue this trade,
Trifling beneath such loads of patience?

Old M. Tis poor mad Tom.

Glost. In the late storm I such a fellow saw,
Which made me think a man a worm.
Where is the lunatic?

Old M. Here, my lord.

Glost. Get thee now away: if for my sake
Thou wilt o'ertake us hence a mile or two,
I' th' way to Dover, do't for ancient love,
And bring some cov'ring for this naked wretch,
Whom I'll entreat, to lead me.

Old M. Alack, my lord, he's mad.

Glost. Tis the time's plague, when madmen lead the
blind.

Do as I bid thee.

Old M. I'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,
Come on't what will. [exit old man]

Glost. Sirrah! naked fellow!

Edg. Poor Tom's a cold.—I cannot fool it longer,
And yet I must—bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed;
Believe't, poor Tom even weeps his blind to see 'em.

Glost. Know'st thou the way to Dover?

Edg. Both stile and gate, horse-way and foot-path.
Poor Tom has been scared out of his good wits.
Bless every true man's son from the foul fiend!

Glost. Here, take this purse; that I am wretched,

E

Makes thee the happier. Heaven deal so still ;
 Thus let the griping usurer's hoard be scatter'd,
 So distribution shall undo excess,
 And each man have enough. Dost thou know Dover ?

Edg. Ay, master.

Glost. There is a cliff whose high and bending head
 Looks dreadfully down on the roaring deep ;
 Bring me but to the very brink of it,
 And I'll repair the poverty thou bear'st
 With something rich about me.—From that place
 I shall no leading need.

Edg. Give me thy arm ; poor Tom shall guide thee.

Glost. Soft ! for I hear the tread of passengers.

enter KENT and CORDELIA.

Cord. Ah me ! your fear's too true, it was the king ;
 I spoke but even now with some that met him,
 As mad as the vex'd sea, singing aloud,
 Crown'd with rank fumiter, and furrow weeds,
 With berries, burdocks, violets, daises, poppies,
 And all the idle flowers that grow
 In our sustaining corn : conduct me to him,
 To prove my last endeavors to restore him,
 And heaven so prosper thee !

Kent. I will, good lady.

Ha ! Gloster here !—turn, poor dark man, and hear
 A friend's condolment, who, at sight of thine,
 Forgets his own distress ; thy old true Kent.

Glost. How ! Kent ? from whence return'd ?

Kent. I have not since my banishment been absent,

But in disguise follow'd th' abandon'd king :
 Twas me thou saw'st with him in the late storm.

Glost. Let me embrace thee ; had I eyes, I now
 Should weep for joy ; but let this trickling blood
 Suffice instead of tears.

Cord. O, misery !

To whom shall I complain, or in what language ?
 Forgive, o, wretched man, the piety
 That brought thee to this pass ; twas I that caused it ;

I cast me at thy feet; and beg of thee
To crush these weeping eyes to equal darkness,
If that will give thee any recompense.

Edg. Was ever season so distress as this? (*aside*)

Glost. I think Cordelia's voice; rise, pious princess,
And take a dark man's blessing.

Cord. O, my Edgar!

My virtue's now grown guilty, works the bane
Of those that do befriend me: heaven forsakes me;
And, when you look that way, it is but just
That you should hate me too.

Edg. O, wave this cutting speech, and spare to
wound

A heart that's on the rack.

Glost. No longer cloud thee, Kent, in that dis-
guise;

There's business for thee, and of noblest weight;
Our injured country is at length in arms,
Urged by the king's inhuman wrongs and mine,
And only want a chief to lead them on;
That task be thine.

Edg. Brave britons! then there's life in't yet!

(*aside*)

Kent. Then have we one cast for our fortune still.

Come, princess, I'll bestow you with the king,
Then on the spur to head these forces.

Farewell, good Gloster; to our conduct trust.

Glost. And be your course as prosp'rous, as tis just.
[*exunt*]

SCENE III—*Goneril's palace.*

enter GONERIL and OSWALD.

Gon. It was great ignorance, Gloster's eyes being out,
To let him live; where he arrives, he moves
All hearts against us: Edmund, I think, is gone,
In pity to his misery, to despatch him.

Osw. No, madam, he's return'd on speedy summons
Back to your sister.

Gon. Ah! I like not that;

Such speed must have the wings of love. Where's Albany?

Osw. Madam, within ; but never man so changed ;
I told him of the uproar of the peasants,
He smiled at it ; when I inform'd him
Of Gloster's treason——

Gon. Trouble him no farther ;
It is his coward spirit. Back to our sister,
Hasten her musters and let her know,
I have given the distaff into my husband's hands ;
That done, with special care deliver these despatches
In private to young Gloster.

enter CAPTAIN of the guard.

Capt. O, madam, most unseasonable news !
The duke of Cornwall's dead of his late wound,
Whose loss your sister has in part supply'd,
Making brave Edmund general of her forces.

Gon. One way, I like this well ;
But, being a widow, and my Gloster with her,
'T may blast the promised harvest of our love.—
A word more, sir ; (to *Oswald*) add speed to your
journey ;
And if you chance to meet with that blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off. [*exunt*]

SCENE IV—another part of the country.

enter EDGAR, as a peasant, and GLOSTER.

Glost. When shall we come to th' top of that same hill !

Edg. We climb it now ; mark, how we labor.

Glost. Methinks the ground is even.

Edg. Horribly steep. Hark, do you hear the sea ?

Glost. No, truly.

Edg. Why, then your other senses grow imperfect
By your eyes' anguish.

Glost. So may it be indeed.

Methinks, thy voice is alter'd, and thou speak'st
In better phrase and matter, than thou did'st.

Edg. You are much deceived ; in nothing am I alter'd,
But my garments.

Glost. Methinks, you're better spoken.

Edg. Come on, sir, here's the place. How fearful
And dizzy tis, to cast one's eyes so low !
The crows and choughs, that wing the midway air,
Show scarce so big as beetles ; half way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire ; dreadful trade !
The fishermen, that walk upon the beach,
Appear like mice ; and yon tall anch'ring bark
Seems lessen'd to her cock : her cock, a buoy,
Almost too small for sight ; the murm'ring surge
Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more ;
Lest my brain turn, and the disorder make me
Tumble down headlong.

Glost. Set me where you stand.

Edg. You are now within a foot of th' extreme verge :
For all beneath the moon I would not now
Leap forward.

Glost. Let go my hand.

Here is another purse, in it a jewel
Well worth a poor man's taking. Get thee farther,
Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.

Edg. Fare you well, sir.—That I do trifle thus
With his despair, is with design to cure it.

Glost. (*kneels*) Thus, mighty gods, this world I do
renounce,
And in your sight shake my afflictions off ;
If I could bear them no longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,
My snuff and feeble part of nature should
Burn itself out. If Edgar live, oh, bless him !
Now, fellow, fare thee well.

Edg. Hold—who comes here ?

*enter king LEAR, a coronet of flowers on his head,
wreaths and garlands about him.*

Lear. No, no ; they cannot touch me for coining ;
I am the king himself.

Edg. O piercing sight !

Lear. Nature's above-art in that respect. There's your press money. That fellow handles his bow like a crow-keeper;—draw me a clothier's yard. A mouse, a mouse! peace, ho! there's my gauntlet; I'll prove it on a giant. Bring up the brown bills. O, well flown, barb! i' th' white, i' th' white.—Hewgh!—Give the word.

Edg. Sweet majoram.

Lear. Pass.

Glost. I know that voice.

Lear. Ha, Goneril! with a white beard? they flatter'd me like a dog, and told me I had white hairs on my chin, before the black ones were there. To say ay and no to every thing that I said,—ay, and no too, was no good divinity. When the rain came once to wet me, and the winds to make me chatter, when the thunder would not peace at my bidding, there I found them, there I smelt them out. Go to, they are not men of their words; they told me I was every thing; tis a lie; I am not ague-proof.

Glost. That voice I well remember: is't not the king?

Lear. Ay, every inch a king: when I do stare, See, how the subject quakes! I pardon that man's life.—What was the cause? Adultery?—

Thou shalt not die. Die for adultery? no—The wren goes to't, and the small gilded fly Engenders in my sight. Let copulation thrive; For Gloster's bastard son was kinder to his father, Than were my daughters, got i' th' lawful bed. To't, luxury, pell mell; for I lack soldiers. There's money for thee.

Glost. Let me kiss that hand.

Lear. Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality.

Glost. Speak, sir, do you know me?

Lear. I remember thine eyes well enough. Nay, do thy worst, blind Cupid, I'll not love.—Read me this challenge; mark but the penning of it.

Glost. Were all the letters suns, I could not see.

Lear. Read, read, read.

Glost. What! with this case of eyes?

Lear. O ho! are you there with me? no eyes in your head, nor no money in your purse? yet you see how this world goes.

Glost. I see it feelingly.

Lear. What! art mad? a man may see how this world goes, with no eyes. Look with thy ears: see how yon justice rails on yon simple thief.—Hark, in thine ear; shake them together, and the first that drops, be it thief or justice, is a villain.—Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?

Glost. Ay, sir.

Lear. And the man run from the cur; there thou might'st behold the great image of authority; a dog's obeyed in office. Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand! why dost thou lash that strumpet? thou hotly lust'st to enjoy her in that kind for which thou whipp'st her; do, do; the judge, that sentenced her, has been before hand with thee.

Glost. How stiff is my vile sense, that yields not yet!

Lear. I tell thee, the usurer hangs the coz'ner.—Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear; Robes and fur-gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold, And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks; Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw doth pierce it.—Why, there tis for thee, my friend; make much of it; It has the power to seal the accuser's lips.—Get thee glass eyes, and like a scurvy politician, seem to see the things thou dost not.—Pull, pull off my boots; hard, harder; so, so.

Glost. O, matter and impertinency mix'd! Reason in madness!

Lear. If thou wilt weap my fortunes, take my eyes. I know thee well enough, thy name is Gloster. Thou must be patient; we came crying hither; Thou know'st, the first time that we taste the air, We wail and cry.—I'll preach to thee; mark me.

Edg. Break, lab'ring heart!

Lear. When we are born, we cry, that we are come
To this great stage of fools.—

enter two KNIGHTS.

I Knight. O ! here he is ; lay hand upon him.—
Sir,

Your dearest daughter sends—

Lear. No rescue ? What, a prisoner ; I am even
the natural fool of fortune. Use me well, you shall
have ransom.—Let me have surgeons. Oh ! I am
cut to the brains.

2 Knight. You shall have any thing.

Lear. No seconds ? all myself ?

I will die bravely, like a bridegroom. What ?
I will be jovial ; come, come ; I am a king,
My masters, know you that ?

1 Knight. You are a royal one, and we obey you.

Lear. It was an excellent stratagem to shoe a troop
of horse with felt ; I'll put it to the proof.—No noise,
no noise.—Now we steal upon these sons-in law, and
then—kill, kill, kill, kill !

[exeunt king Lear and the knights]

Edg. A sight most moving in the meanest wretch,
Past speaking in a king !

Glost Now, good sir, what are you ?

Edg. A most poor man, made tame to fortune's
strokes,

And prone to pity by experienced sorrows.
Give me your hand.

Glost. You, gentle gods, take my breath from me,
And let not my ill genius tempt me more
To die before you please.

enter OSWALD.

Osw. A proclaim'd prize ! o most happily met !
That eyeless head of thine was first framed flesh
To raise my fortunes. Thou old, unhappy, traitor,
The sword is out that must destroy thee.

Glost. Now let thy friendly hand put strength
enough to't.

Osw. Wherefore, bold peasant,

Dar'st thou support a publish'd traitor ? hence,
Lest I destroy thee too ; let go his arm.

Edg. Chill not let go, zir, without 'vurther 'casion.

Osw. Let go, slave ; or thou diest.

Edg. Good gentleman, go your gate, and let poor
volk pass ; and chu'd ha' bin' zwagger'd out of my life, it
would not have been so long as tis by a vortnight.—
Nay, an' thou com'st near th' old man, I'st try wheth-
er your costard or my ballow be th' harder.

Ows. Out, dunghill !

Edg. Chill pick your teeth, zir : come, no matter
vor your foines. (*Edgar knocks him down*)

Osw. Slave, thou hast slain me ; oh ! untimely death !
(*dies*)

Edg. I know thee well, a serviceable villain,
As duteous to the vices of his mistress,
As lust could wish.

Glost. What ? is he dead ?

Edg. This is a letter carrier, and may have
Some papers of intelligence, that may stand
Our party in good stead to know.—What's here ?
(*takes a letter out of his pocket and reads it*)

To Edmund, earl of Gloster.

Let our mutual loves be remembered : you have many
opportunities to cut Albany off. If he returns the
conqueror, then I am still a prisoner, and his bed my
gaol ; from the loathed warmth of which deliver me,
and supply the place for your labor. GONERIL.

A plot upon the duke her husband's life,
And the exchange my brother !
In time and place convenient I'll produce
These letters to the sight of th' injured duke,
As best shall serve our purpose.

(*a march at a distance*)

Come, your hand ;
Far off methinks I hear the beaten drum :
Come, sir, I will bestow you with a friend. [*exunt*]

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

SCENE I—*a chamber—king LEAR asleep on a couch—
CORDELIA, PHYSICIAN, and two knights standing
by him.*

Cord. His sleep is sound, and may have good effect
To cure his jarring senses, and repair
This breach of nature.

Phys. We have employ'd the utmost power of art,
And this deep rest will perfect our design.

Cord. O Regan! Goneril! inhuman sisters!
Had he not been your father, these white hairs
Had challenged sure some pity! was this a face
To be exposed against the jarring winds?
My enemy's dog, though he had bit me, should
Have stood that night against my fire.—He wakes;
speak to him.

Phys. Madam, do you: tis fittest.

Cord. How does my royal lord? how fares your
majesty?

Lear. You do me wrong, to take me out o'th' grave.

Cord. Speak to me, sir; who am I?

Lear. You are a soul in bliss; but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, which my own tears
Do scald like molten lead.

Cord. Sir, do you know me?

Lear. You are a spirit, I know; when did you die?

Cord. Still, still, far wide!

Phys. Madam, he's scarce awake; he'll soon grow
more composed.

Lear. Where have I been? where am I? fair day-
light?

I am mightily abused; I should even die with pity
To see another thus. I will not swear
These are my hands.

Cord. O, look upon me, sir,
And hold your hand in blessing o'er me. Nay,
You must not kneel.

Lear. Pray, do not mock me ;
I am a very foolish, fond, old man,
Fourscore and upward ; and, to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.

Cord. Nay, then farewell to patience ? witness for
me,
Ye mighty pow'rs, I ne'er complain'd till now !

Lear. Methinks, I should know you, and know this
man ;
Yet I am doubtful ; for I'm mainly ignorant
What place this is ; and all the skill I have
Remembers not these garments ; nor do I know
Where I did sleep last night. Pray, do not mock me ;
For, as I am a man, I think that lady
To be my child Cordelia.

Cord. O, my dear, dear father !

Lear. Be your tears wet ? yes, faith ; pray, do not
weep.

I know I have given thee cause, and am so humbled
With crosses since, that I could ask
Forgiveness of thee, were it possible
That thou could'st grant it ;
If thou hast poison for me, I will drink it,
Bless thee, and die.

Cord. O, pity, sir, a bleeding heart, and cease
This killing language.

Lear. Tell me, friends, where am I ?

Phys. In your own kingdom, sir.

Lear. Do not abuse me.

Phys. Be comforted, good madam ; for the violence
Of his distemper's past ; we'll lead him in,
Nor trouble him till he is better settled.

Will it please you, sir, walk into freer air ?

Lear. You must bear with me, I am old and foolish.
Forget and forgive.

*(the physician leads off king Lear, followed
by the two knights)*

Cord. The gods restore you !—*(a distant march)*
Hark, I hear afar
The beaten drum, Old Kent's a man of's word.

Oh ! for an arm
 Like the fierce thunderer's, when the earth-born sons
 Storm'd heaven, to fight this injured father's battle !
 That I could shift my sex, and dye me deep
 In his opposer's blood ? but, as I may,
 With women's weapons, piety and pray'rs,
 I'll aid his cause. You never erring gods,
 Fight on his side, and thunder on his foes
 Such tempests, as his poor aged head sustain'd !
 Your image suffers when a monarch bleeds ;
 Tis your own cause ; for that your succors bring ;
 Revenge yourselves, and right an injured king.

[*exit Cordelia*]

SCENE II—*a valley near the field of battle*

enter EDGAR and GLOSTER.

Edg. Here, sir, take you the shadow of this tree
 For your good host ; pray that the right may thrive :
 If ever I return to you again,
 I'll bring you comfort.

[*exit Edgar*]

Glost. Thanks, friendly sir ;
 The fortune, your good cause deserves, betide you !
 (*un alarm within*)
 The fight grows hot ; the whole war's now at work,
 And the gored battle bleeds in every vein,
 Whilst drums and trumpets drown loud slaughter's
 roar.

Where's Gloster now, that used to head the onset,
 And scour the ranks where deadliest danger lay ?
 Here, like a shepherd, in a lonely shade,
 Idle, unarm'd, and list'ning to the fight.
 No more of shelter, thou blind worm, but forth
 To th' open field ; the war may come this way,
 And crush thee into rest. —

O, dark despair ! when, Edgar, wilt thou come
 To pardon, and dismiss me to the grave ?

(*a retreat sounded*)

Hark ! a retreat ; the king, I fear, has lost.

enter EDGAR.

Edg. Away, old man ; give me your hand ; away !
King Lear has lost ; he and his daughter ta'en :

And this, ye gods, is all that I can save

Of this most precious wreck. Give me your hand.

Glost. No farther, sir ; a man may rot even here.

Edg. What ! in ill thoughts again ? men must endure

Their going hence, even as their coming hither.

Glost. And that's true too.

[Exeunt]

SCENE III—the field of battle.

(flourish)

enter the duke of ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, EDMUND, CAPTAIN of the guards, and soldiers—with king LEAR, KENT, and CORDELIA, prisoners.

Alb. It is enough to have conquer'd ; cruelty
Should ne'er survive the fight. Captain o' the guards,
Treat well your royal prisoners, till you have
Our farther orders, as you hold our pleasure.

Gon. Hark, sir, not as you hold our husbands'
pleasure, *(to the captain, aside)*

But as you hold your life, despatch your pris'ners.
Our empire can have no sure settlement
But in their death.

Capt. I shall obey your orders.

Edm. Sir, I approve it safest to pronounce
Sentence of death upon this wretched king,
Whose age has charms in it, his title more,
To draw the commons once more to his side ;
Twere best prevent——

Alb. Sir, by your favor,
I hold you but a subject of this war,
Not as a brother.

Reg. That's as we list to grace him.

F

Have you forgot that he did lead our pow'rs ?
 Bore the commission of our place and person ?
 And that authority may well stand up,
 And call itself your brother.

Gon. Not so hot ;
 In his own merits he exalts himself
 More than in your addition.

enter EDGAR, disguised.

Alb. What art thou ?

Edg. Pardon me, sir, that I presume to stop
 A prince and conq'rour ; ere you triumph,
 Give ear to what a stranger can deliver
 Of what concerns you more than triumph can.
 I do impeach your general there of treason ;
 Lord Edmund, that usurps the name of Gloster,
 Of foulest practice 'gainst your life and honor :
 This charge is true ; and wretched though I seem,
 I can produce a champion that will prove,
 In single combat, what I do avouch,
 If Edmund dares but trust his cause and sword.

Edg. What will not Edmund dare ? my lord, I be
 The favor that you'd instantly appoint
 The place where I may meet this challenger,
 Whom I will sacrifice to my wrong'd fame :
 Remember, sir, that injured honor's nice,
 And cannot brook delay.

Alb. Anon, before our tent, i' th' army's view,
 There let the herald cry.

Edg. I thank your highness in my champion
 name :

He'll wait your trumpet's call.

[*exit Edg*

Alb. Lead.

[*entr*

*manent king LEAR, KENT, CORDELIA, captain of
 guard, and soldiers.*

Kent. O Kent ! Cordelia !

You are the only pair that I e'er wrong'd,
 And the just gods have made you witnesses
 Of my disgrace ;—the very shame of fortune,

To see me chain'd and shackled at these years !

Yet were you but spectators of my woes,

Not fellow sufferers, all were well.

Cord. This language, sir, adds yet to our affliction.

Lear. Thou, Kent, didst head the troops that fought
my battle,

Exposed'st thy life and fortune for a master,

That had, as I remember, banish'd thee.

Kent. Pardon me, sir, that once I broke your or-
ders :

Banish'd by you, I kept me here disguised

To watch your fortunes, and protect your person :

You know you entertain'd a rough, blunt fellow,

One Caius, and you thought he did you service.

Lear. My trusty Caius, I have lost him too !

'Twas a rough honesty.

Kent. I was that Caius,

Disguised in that coarse dress to follow you.

Lear. My Caius too ! wer't thou my trusty Caius ?

Enough, enough——

Kent. Ah me, he faints ! his blood forsakes his cheek

Help, Kent,——

Lear. No, no, they shall not see us weep,

We'll see them rot first.—Guards, lead away to pris-
on.

Come Kent ; Cordelia, come.—Ha ! have I caught
you ?

He, that parts us, must bring a brand from heaven ;

Together we'll out-toil the spite of hell,

And die the wonders of the world.—Away. [exunt

SCENE IV—the duke of Albany's tent.

(flourish)

enter the duke of ALBANY, EDMUND, HERALD, attend-
ants, and soldiers.

Alb. Now, Gloster, trust to thy single virtue ; for
thy soldiers,

All levied in my name, have in my name
Ta'en their discharge. Now let our trumpets speak,
And herald, read out this.

(herald reads) If any man of quality within the lists of
the army will maintain upon Edmund, supposed earl
of Gloster, that he is a manifold traitor, let him ap-
pear by the third sound of the trumpet ; he is bold in
his defence.

Sound ;—again ;—again.

*(the trumpet sounds at each order—and is then
answered from within)*

enter EDGAR,

Alb. Lord Edgar !

Edm. Ha ! my brother !

This is the only combatant I could fear ;
For in my breast guilt duels on his side.
But, conscience, what have I to do with thee ?
Awe thou thy dull legitimate slaves ; but I
Was born a libertine, and so I keep me.

Edg. My noble prince, a word ;—ere we engage,
Into your highness' hands I give this paper ;
It will the truth of my impeachment prove,
Whatever be my fortune in the fight.

Alb. We shall peruse it.

Edg. Now, Edmund, draw thy sword,
That, if my speech has wrong'd a noble heart,
Thy arm may do thee justice : here, i' th' presence
Of this high prince,
I brand thee with the spotted name of traitor,
False to thy gods, thy father, and thy brother,
And, what is more, thy friend, false to this prince ;
If then thou shar'st a spark of Gloster's virtue,
Acquit thyself ; or, if thou shar'st his courage,
Meet this defiance bravely.

Edm. And dares Edgar,
The beaten, routed Edgar, brave his conqueror ?
From all thy troops and thee I forced the field ;
'Thou hast lost the gen'ral stake, and art thou now
Come with thy petty single stock to play

This after-game ?

Edg. Half blooded man,
Thy father's sin first, then his punishment,
From thy licentious mother
Thou draw'st thy villany ; but, for thy part
Of Gloster's blood, I hold thee worth my sword.

Edm. Thou bear'st thee on thy mother's piety,
Which I despise ; thy mother being chaste,
Thou art assur'd thou art but Gloster's son ;
But mine, disdaining constancy, leaves me
No hope that I am sprung from nobler blood,
And possibly a king might be my sire :
But be my birth's uncertain chance as twill,
Who twas that had the hit to father me
I know not ; tis enough that I am I ;
Of this one thing I'm certain, that I have
A daring soul, and so have at thy heart.

(trumpet sounds—they fight—Edmund falls)
Tis past,—and so am I.

Edg. As thou art my father's son,
Exchange we charity on thy repentance.

Edm. Thy sword has proved thy truth.—Forgive me,
Edgar.—

O ! ere life leaves me, let me do some good,
In despite of my own nature : quickly send,
Be brief, into the castle ; for my order
Is on the life of Lear, and of Cordelia.

Edg. O, let us fly, my lord, to save their lives !

Alb. The heavens defend them !—bear him hence a
while.

*[exunt the duke of Albany and Edgar, with a
part of the soldiers, and the other part bear
Edmund away.]*

.SCENE V—a prison.

King LEAR asleep, with his head on CORDELIA's lap.

Cord. What toils, thou wretched king, hast thou
endured,

To make thee draw, in chains, a sleep so sound !
 Thy better angel charm thy ravish'd mind
 With fancied freedom ! peace is used to lodge
 On cottage straw ; thou hast the beggar's bed ;
 Therefore shouldst have the beggar's careless thought,
 And now, my Edgar, I remember thee :
 What fate has seized thee in this general wreck
 I know not, but I know thou must be wretched,
 Because Cordelia holds thee dear.—
 O gods ! a sudden gloom o'erwhelms me, and the im-
 age
 Of death o'erspreads the place.—Ha ! who are these ?

*enter CAPTAIN of the guards, another OFFICER, and
 soldiers with cords.*

Capt. Now, sirs, despatch ; already you are paid
 In part, the best of your reward's to come.

Lear. Charge, charge upon their flank ; their left
 wing halts ;

Push, push the battle, and the day's our own ;
 Their ranks are broken ; down, down with Albany —
 Who holds my hands ?—O, thou deceiving sleep,
 I was this very minute on the chase,
 And now a pris'ner here !—what mean the slaves ?
 You will not murder me ?

Cord. Help, earth and heaven !
 For your soul's sake, dear sir, and for the gods',—

Offs. No tears, good lady ; no pleading against gold
 and preferment.

Come, sirs, make ready your cords.

Cord. You, sir, I'll seize,
 You have a human form ; and, if no prayers
 Can touch your soul to spare a poor king's life,
 If there be any thing that you hold dear,
 By that I beg you to despatch me first.

Capt. Comply with her request ; despatch her first.

Lear. Off, hell-hounds ! by the gods I charge you,
 spare her ;

'Tis my Cordelia, my true pious daughter ;—

No pity?—nay, then take an old man's vengeance.

*(king Lear snatches a sword from the officer,
and strikes down the two soldiers who had
seized Cordelia)*

enter EDGAR, the duke of ALBANY, and king Lear's
KNIGHTS.

Edg. Death! hell! ye vultures, hold your impious
hands, ◆

Or take a speedier death than you would give.

Alb. Guards, seize those instruments of cruelty.

Cord. Oh, my Edgar!

Edg. My dear Cordelia! lucky was the minute
Of our approach; the gods have weigh'd our suff'rings;
We've pass'd the fire, and now must shine to ages.

Knight. Look here, my lord; see, where the gener-
ous king

Has slain two of them.

Lear. Did I not, fellow?

I've seen the day, with my good biting falchion
I could have made them skip;—I am old now,
And these vile crosses spoil me; out of breath,
Fie, oh! quite out of breath, and spent.

Alb. Bring in old Kent [*exit a knight*] and, Edgar,
guide you hither

Your father, who, you said, was near. [*exit Edgar*
enter KENT and the knight.

Lear. Who are you?

My eyes are none o' th' best, I'll tell you straight:

Oh, Albany! well, sir, we are your captives,

And you are come to see death pass upon us.

Why this delay?—or is't your highness' pleasure

To give us first the torture? say you so?

Why, here's old Kent, and I, as tough a pair

As e'er bore tyrant stroke;—but my Cordelia,

My poor Cordelia here, o pity—

Alb. Thou injured majesty,
The wheel of fortune now has made her circle,
And blessings yet stand 'twixt thy grave and thee.

Lear. Com'st thou, inhuman lord, to soothe us back

To a fool's paradise of hope, to make
Our doom more wretched? go to; we are too well
Acquainted with misfortune, to be gull'd
With lying hope; no, we will hope no more.

Alb. I have a tale t' unfold, so full of wonder,
As cannot meet an easy faith;
But, by that royal injured head, tis true.

Kent. What would your highness?

Alb. Know, the noble Edgar
Impeach'd lord Edmund, since the fight, of treason,
And dared him for the proof to single combat,
In which the gods confirm'd his charge by conquest;
I left e'en now the traitor wounded mortally.

Lear. And whither tends this story?

Alb. Ere they fought,
Lord Edgar gave into my hands this paper,
A blacker scroll of treason and of lust
Than can be found in the records of hell:
There, sacred sir, behold the character
Of Goneril, the worst of daughters, but
More vicious wife.

Cord. Could there be yet addition to their guilt?
What will not they, that wrong a father, do?

Alb. Since then my injuries, Lear, fall in with thine,
I have resolved the same redress for both.

Kent. What says my lord?

Cord. Speak: for methought I heard
The charming voice of a descending god.

Alb. The troops, by Edmund raised, I have dis-
banded:

Those, that remain, are under my command.
What comfort may be brought to cheer your age,
And heal your savage wrongs, shall be apply'd;
For to your majesty we do resign
Your kingdom, save what part yourself conferr'd
On us in marriage.

Kent. Hear you that, my liege?

Cord. Then there are gods, and virtue is their care.

Lear. Is't possible?

Let the spheres stop their course, the sun make halt,

The winds be hush'd, the seas and fountains rest,
All nature pause, and listen to the change !

Where is my Kent, my Caius ?

Kent. Here, my liege.

Lear. Why, I have news, that will recall thy youth ;
Ha ! did'st thou hear't ?—or did th' inspiring gods
Whisper to me alone—old Lear shall be
A king again ?

Kent. The prince, that like a god has power, has
said it.

Lear. Cordelia then shall be a queen, mark that ;
Cordelia shall be queen ; winds catch the sound,
And bear it on your rosy wings to heaven,
Cordelia is a queen.

enter EDGAR, with GLOSTER.

Alb. Look, sir, where pious Edgar comes,
Leading his eyeless father. O, my liege,
His wondrous story well deserves your leisure ;
What he has done and suffer'd for your sake,
What for the fair Cordelia's.

Glost. Where's my liege ? conduct me to his knees,
to hail

His second birth of empire : my dear Edgar
Has, with himself, reveal'd the king's blest restoration.

Lear. My poor dark Gloster !

Glost. O, let me kiss once more that scepter'd hand !

Lear. Hold, thou mistakest the majesty ; kneel
here ;

Cordelia has our power, Cordelia's queen.

Speak, is not that the noble, suff'ring Edgar ?

Glost. My pious son, more dear than my lost eyes.

Lear. I wrong'd him too ; but here's the fair amends.

Edg. Your leave, my liege, for an unwelcome mes-
sage :

Edmund, but that's a trifle, is expired.

What more will touch you, your imperious daughters,
Goneril and haughty Regan, both are dead,
Each by the other poison'd at a banquet :
This, dying, they confess'd.

Cord. O, fatal period of ill govern'd life!

Lear. Ingrateful as they were, my heart feels yet
A pang of nature for their wretched fall.—

But, Edgar, I defer thy joys too long :

Thou served'st distress'd Cordelia ; take her crown'd,

Th' imperial grace fresh blooming on her brow :

Nay, Gloster, thou hast here a father's right ;

Thy helping hand to heap blessings on their heads.

Kent. Old Kent throws in his hearty wishes too.

Edg. The gods and you too largely recompense
What I have done ; the gift strikes merit dumb.

Cord. Nor do I blush to own myself o'erpaid
For all my suff'rings past.

Edg. Divine Cordelia, all the gods can witness
How much thy love to empire I prefer.

Thy bright example shall convince the world,

Whatever storms of fortune are decreed,

That truth and virtue shall at last succeed.

Glost. Now, gentle gods, give Gloster his discharge !

Lear. No, Gloster, thou hast business yet for life ;

Thou, Kent, and I, retired to some close cell,

Will gently pass our short reserves of time

In calm reflections on our fortunes past,

Cheer'd with relation of the prosperous reign

Of this celestial pair ; thus our remains

Shall in an even course of thought be past,

Enjoy the present hour, nor fear the last.

[*exeunt omnes*]

END OF KING LEAR.

SCOTCH SHAVING.

If north of Aberfoil you've ever been,
'Mongst Scotland's highland sons, you must have seen
A custom common and inveterate there,
That every one, almost is used to wear,
 A face as thin and hardy as a hatchet.
There lived in Dornoch, long ago, a man
 With jaws more lank I think than e'er you saw,
Dame nature had surpassed her usual plan,
 And out-be-scotchified a lanthorn jaw:
 From that to Solway-Firth not one could match
 it.

This fellow, one day for a ~~barber~~ sent—
 The barber brought his shave-pot and his case,
And having lathered Mac—to labor went,
 To clean the crop of stubble from his face,
But first there is a thing that must be shown—
In Scotland they've a custom of their own,
 Which every son of soap among them follows:
They thrust their fingers in a fellow's cheek,
Which meets the razor as if plump and sleek,
Along the varying landscape of ther jowls;
For otherwise they couldn't for their souls,
 E'er touch the bristles down among the hollows.

Now this way Frizzle took, to dress the barber
That screen'd our scotchman's grinders from the weather,
Still laboring on with more of haste than care,
He hardly even stopt to spit and swear;
 Because forsooth he hadn't time to linger:

SCOTCH SHAVING.

'Till finding gentler touches all must fail,
He made a scrape that *rather* pair'd his nail,
By giving Mac a *window* to his face ;
But not reflecting on the woeful case,
Cried, " damn your lanthorn jaws, I've cut my
finger !"



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